

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 46, and 69 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 46, and 69 have been amended to disclaim the cited document, and claim 47 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. A version of all pending claims is presented at pages 2-7 of this Reply.

Applicants' representative notes with appreciation the indication that claims 38 and 47 have been deemed allowable, and that independent claim 1 would be in condition for allowance if the features of either claim 38 or 47 were incorporated therein. Further, applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview held December 16, 2008 wherein the Examiner clarified the extent of the allowable subject matter. To this end independent claim 1 has been amended to comport with the Examiner's indication, and it is now believed that independent claim 1 and associated dependent claims are in condition for allowance. Further, independent claim 69 has also been amended with the allowable subject matter and it too is now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

**I. Rejection of Claims 1, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 42, 46, and 69 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)**

Claims 1, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 41, 42, 46, and 69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Horvitz (US 6,988,132). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Horvitz does not disclose or suggest all features set forth in the subject claims. In particular, and as indicated in the instant Office Action regarding the allowability of claims 38 and 47, Horvitz does not disclose or suggest a groupwise communication assembler that assembles the group of communicating parties, identifies one or more group member classifications required for the group communication, identifies a minimal number of communicating parties from each of the one or more group member classifications required for the group communication, and verifies that at least the minimal number of communicating parties from each of the one or more group member classifications are available for the group communication. In view of applicants' representative's amendment to independent claims 1 and 69 it is now believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and that

the subject rejection is now moot. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSION**

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP954US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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